

Sociology of aging discussion 7

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Sociology Discussion 7: Sociology in Aging Question Social stratification and how it influences aging Social stratification is the system that classifies the people in the society according to the rank of their power, wealth and status. Based on the information provided by Harris (2007) it is evident that this system has been in existence for many years to the point where people dream of a society that is not socially stratified (pg. 127). This system of inequality has remained active for the last 200 years. A look at the aging members of the society shows that because they have been around for long, they have had enough time to get rich. Thus, they form the highest segment with the richest people in the society. Harris (2007) affirms that the median age for the richest people who are in America is 65 years. Based on this information, it is clear that social stratification has an impact on aging because the richest and elderly people are from groups that are powerful in America. High-income earning families also tend to have older persons who live for long to continue being in possession of their wealth. Such wealth is also likely pass down to many more generations in future as inheritance when the aged family members die. Older people from upper classes are more satisfied with their life than people in lower classes (Harris, 2007). This shows that classes, a product of social stratification have an impact on the lives of the aged.

Question 2: Social stratification and class division, do they perpetuate ageism?

As noted in the first paragraph, social stratification has an influence on how people age because those who are in upper classes are more satisfied with their lives. This system also perpetuates ageism because if an elderly person from a lower class becomes sick, they are not likely to have enough

resources to get high quality medical care. Lack of financial resources in old age also contributes to stress and poor health which does not result to successful aging as we had earlier learnt in class.

Reference

Harris, D. (2007). " Chapter 7: Social stratification and class". In *The sociology of aging*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Inc.